



Coconino County Sheriff's Office

Bill Pribil, Sheriff

MEDIA RELEASE

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Community Emergency Response Team Training CERT Offered in Flagstaff

Flagstaff, AZ – The Coconino County Sheriff's Office and the Flagstaff Police Department will conduct a basic Community Emergency Response Team training session at the Flagstaff Fire Department Training Facility located at 2800 East El Paso, (Near the Wildcat Treatment Plant). This 3 day class will be held on Friday November 20th, 2009 through Sunday November 22nd, 2009 (Friday 6pm to 9pm, Saturday 8am to 5 pm, Sunday 8am to 5 pm). There is no charge for this training.

CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens will be initially on their own and their actions can make a difference. Through training, citizens can manage utilities and put out small fires; treat the three killers by opening airways, controlling bleeding, and treating for shock; provide basic medical aid; search for and rescue victims safely; and organize themselves and spontaneous volunteers to be effective.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services will not be able to meet the demand for these services. Factors as number of victims, communication failures, and road blockages will prevent people from accessing emergency services they have come to expect at a moment's notice through 911. People will have to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.

One also expects that under these kinds of conditions, family members, fellow employees, and neighbors will spontaneously try to help each other. This was the case following the Mexico City earthquake where untrained, spontaneous volunteers saved 800 people.



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However, 100 people lost their lives while attempting to save others. This is a high price to pay and is preventable through training.

The training consists of the following:

- Session I, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: Addresses hazards to which people are vulnerable in their community. Materials cover actions that participants and their families take before, during, and after a disaster. As the session progresses, the instructor begins to explore an expanded response role for civilians in that they should begin to consider themselves disaster workers. Since they will want to help their family members and neighbors, this training can help them operate in a safe and appropriate manner. The CERT concept and organization are discussed as well as applicable laws governing volunteers in that jurisdiction.
- Session II, DISASTER FIRE SUPPRESSION: Briefly covers fire chemistry, hazardous materials, fire hazards, and fire suppression strategies. However, the thrust of this session is the safe use of fire extinguishers, sizing up the situation, controlling utilities, and extinguishing a small fire.
- Session III, DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS PART I: Participants practice diagnosing and treating airway obstruction, bleeding, and shock by using simple triage and rapid treatment techniques.
- Session IV, DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS, PART II: Covers evaluating patients by doing a head to toe assessment, establishing a medical treatment area, performing basic first aid, and practicing in a safe and sanitary manner.
- Session V, LIGHT SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS: Participants learn about search and rescue planning, size-up, search techniques, rescue techniques, and most important, rescuer safety.
- Session VI, DISASTER PSYCHOLOGY AND TEAM ORGANIZATION: Covers signs and symptoms that might be experienced by the disaster victim and worker. It addresses CERT organization and management principles and the need for documentation.
- Session VII, COURSE REVIEW AND DISASTER SIMULATION: Participants review their answers from a take home examination. Finally, they practice the skills that they have learned during the previous six sessions in disaster activity.

During each session participants are required to bring safety equipment (gloves, goggles, mask) and disaster supplies (bandages, flashlight, dressings) which will be used during the session. By doing this for each session, participants are building a disaster response kit of items that they will need during a disaster.

To register for this class or for more information about Community Emergency Response Team Training, please call Gerry Blair at the Coconino County Sheriff's Office (928) 226-5089.

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